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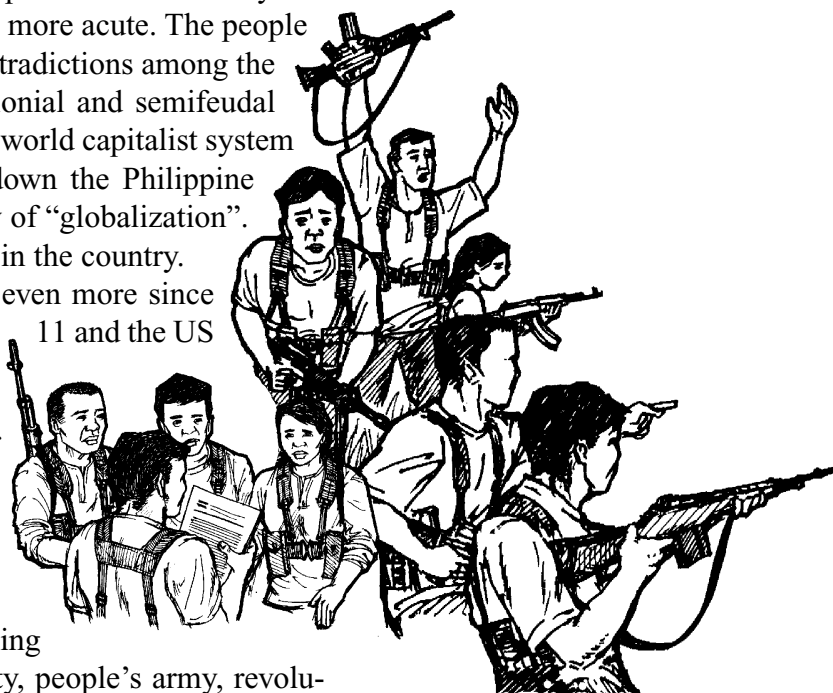
EDITORIAL

Further advance guerrilla warfare throughout the country!

The crisis-ridden reactionary system in the country continues to slump and disintegrate. The nation's economy continues to worsen and the poverty and oppression suffered by the masses of the people are becoming more acute. The people have more considerable basis to protest. Contradictions among the ruling classes are intensifying. The semicolonial and semifeudal system in the country reels, especially as the world capitalist system sinks into recession. The latter is pulling down the Philippine economy, tied to it all the more by the policy of "globalization". New disorders are erupting in the world and in the country.

The crisis of imperialism has worsened even more since the terrorist attack in the US on September 11 and the US war of aggression against Afghanistan. In the Philippines, the ruling system is distressed anew with Misuari's repudiation of the agreement between the MNLF and the government and the outbreak of fighting between the Misuari faction of the MNLF and the government's armed forces.

The steadfastly and rapidly strengthening subjective forces of the revolution—the Party, people's army, revolutionary mass movement and united front—are in a much better position now to advance people's war in the light of prevailing excellent conditions for revolution.



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A CALL TO OUR READERS

The Editorial Staff of *Ang Bayan* calls on readers to contribute to our publication by submitting comments and suggestions, news items or revolutionary experiences that are worth printing in our paper.

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The US-Macapagal-Arroyo regime responds with even more repression to the intensifying crisis of the semicolonial and semi-feudal system. Alongside the regime's intensifying attacks on guerrilla fronts of the New People's Army, it is taking a hard-line stance with regard to the peace talks.

The government's armed forces are principally concentrated on the NPA and its revolutionary base. At present, 75% of AFP and CAFGU combatants (55,288 personnel) are concentrated against the NPA. There are 11,600 forces positioned against the MILF and 8,700 against the Abu Sayyaf.

Meanwhile, even as the NDFP and GRP panels have agreed to resume peace talks, the regime continues to impede its progress. The regime insists on its condition that the NDFP cease what the GRP calls "political assassinations". This violates a basic principle in The Hague Declaration of 1992 (the linchpin agreement in the peace talks) which states that the talks should be conducted without preconditions from either side. The imposition of such a condition is tantamount to requiring the NDFP to relinquish its responsibility to dispense justice in accordance with the decrees of the revolutionary organs of political power and the people's courts.

Obviously, peace talks are not a priority of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime. Thus, it has time and again been imposing conditions and arbitrarily suspending the talks. At present, the regime is more interested in defeating the revolutionary movement by means of all-out war.

In its intent to crush the revolutionary movement, the enemy is implementing the tactic of concentration to take advantage of its strategic military superiority over the NPA. The AFP is massing several brigades of troops in the first 13 priority guerrilla fronts (which it intends to destroy by 2002), carrying out fierce offensives and going on a ruthless rampage against the people. This enemy campaign is being implemented within the framework of Oplan Makabayan/Balangai.

Due to a shortage of forces and resources, the AFP is compelled to prioritize certain selected targets of concentration by each area command: Mindoro Oriental (SOLCOM and the AFP general command); Isabela-Quirino-Aurora-Nueva Ecija (NOLCOM), Bohol (VISCOM), and the Caraga Region (SOUTHCOR). Next to Basilan, Mindoro Oriental suffers the highest enemy concentration today. Upon Macapagal-Arroyo's direct order, half of the 13 combat battalions of the AFP presently deployed in the Southern Tagalog region have converged in Mindoro, aside from two battalions of the PNP.

As a result of these concentrated operations by the enemy's armed forces, the people's welfare and human rights are relent-

lessly trampled upon. This proceeds from the so-called “back-to-basics orientation”, which involves no less than a return to the purely military basic orientation and the abandonment of the old deceptive civic action programs.

Such an orientation involves a complete disregard for how people are treated and how military operations may affect them. The spate of victims of forced evacuations, especially in Mindanao and Mindoro, deserves notice. This has wrought cruel hardships and injuries on the people and has thus resulted in the further isolation of the enemy from the people.

We carry out our line of intensive and extensive guerrilla warfare within the strategic defensive stage by launching tactical offensives of various sizes that the people’s army can win against weak sections of the enemy in as many fronts as possible throughout the country.

In the face of enemy concentration in some guerrilla fronts, we need to launch an increasing number of tactical offensives in even more parts of the country. Thus, the enemy will be compelled to overstretch its forces and attention across an increasing number of guerrilla fronts and a wider field of combat. This, even as we attack isolated small and weak sections of big and strong concentrations of the enemy.

In this manner, we steadily strengthen ourselves and gradually weaken the enemy. The strategic superiority of the enemy with regard to military matters can always be transformed into the revolutionary armed forces’ tactical superiority. This can be achieved through intensive and extensive guerrilla warfare on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base.

In this regard, the victorious tactical offensive of the NPA in Cateel, Davao Oriental on November 10 is good news. In that battle, the NPA annihilated 18 soldiers from the headquarters of the AFP’s 27th Special Forces Company, wounded 11 others and confiscated 21 high-powered rifles.

It is important to renew and strive to carry out the Party’s call in its statement on the 32nd anniversary of the founding of the NPA: Forces of the people’s army spread out in more than 100 guerrilla fronts should launch series of tactical offensives that can be won. If on the average we succeed in seizing even only 10 rifles from the enemy forces in every guerrilla front every month, we shall thus be able to cumulatively win bigger victories in war. This will certainly overextend the forces of the enemy and expose their weak sections, which we can easily annihilate. **AB**

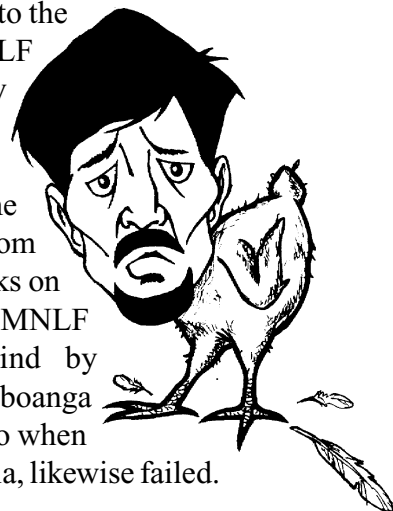
Some lessons from Nur Misuari’s errors and failure

Failure lay at the end of the long series of errors and opportunism in Nur Misuari’s leadership over the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). His leadership was marked by capitulationist and fruitless agreements with the government, indulgence in the corruption of the reactionary political system and, after being pushed into a corner, a resort to desperate and futile action.

After being isolated within the MNLF itself and from the Moro people, Misuari attempted to stage a comeback at the last minute by ordering an assault on the camp of the AFP’s 104th Brigade in Jolo, Sulu on November 20. This desperate plan to forestall the elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which ended his governorship, met with defeat.

The MNLF forces, who should have been withdrawn early on in an orderly manner to seriously resume the armed struggle and repudiate the anti-Moro agreement, were merely dissipated as they engaged in adventurist attacks. The AFP was able to prepare for the attack and thus sustained minimum losses. The incident was a huge blow to the

Misuari-led MNLF forces especially since most of the estimated 150 casualties from the fighting came from their ranks. Attacks on the AFP by other MNLF forces left behind by Misuari in Zamboanga and Maguindanao when he fled to Malaysia, likewise failed.



Other MNLF forces in Cotabato City were taken by surprise and disarmed. They also earned the people's ire because of their disregard for the safety of civilians, as they took more than 160 people hostage when they escaped.

The series of failures that befell the MNLF under Misuari's leadership (and which had now resulted in total defeat), are the result of the historic deception and oppression that the reactionary regime has inflicted since the Marcos dictatorship up to the present in the process of negotiations and the granting of supposed concessions to the Moro people fighting the government. They are likewise the result of Misuari's capitulationist and opportunist policy and attitude in entering into agreements with and eventually joining the reactionary government in the form of a sham autonomous regional government.

Because of all this, Misuari was roundly criticized by the revolutionary forces. When Misuari played the fool during the Marcos dictatorship in drafting the Tripoli Agreement, MNLF forces that wanted to continue waging the Bangsamoro revolution broke away and formed the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The agreements entered into by the MNLF with the government do not present any advantage to them and their struggle against national oppression and for self-determination.

After Misuari once again allowed himself to be deceived under the Ramos regime in 1996, most of the MNLF forces that remained true to the cause transferred to the MILF. As time passes, other MNLF forces and the Moro people are realizing that the agreements entered into by the MNLF with the government do not present any advantage to them and their struggle against national oppression and for self-determination. They are able to have a clearer understanding of the failures that have befallen the MNLF struggle under Misuari's leadership.

Many of those who persisted with the MNLF were not able to take the anomalies and corruption that they witnessed in Misuari. In April 2001, the Council of 15 (or Executive Committee) of the MNLF ousted Misuari as chairperson by "retiring" him and appointing him "chairman emeritus". The decision was affirmed by the MNLF Central Committee. In a resolution, the Council of 15 said that it had lost confidence in Misuari. It cited his "dictatorial, arrogant and divisive style of leadership". The resolution stated that "Since the signing of the peace agreement between the GRP and the MNLF on September 2, 1996 and Misuari's assumption of his post as governor of the ARMM and chairperson of the SPCPD, on the whole, he achieved nothing for the welfare of the MNLF and the Bangsamoro people."

The new MNLF leadership has entered into a tactical alliance with the MILF. They have come up with a Unity Pact, which opens the possibility for power-sharing between

the MILF and MNLF in the context of a new arrangement for Bangsamoro autonomy that may be set up.

Misuari attempted to regain credibility even as his power and prestige dwindled. He convened the 4th Bangsamoro People's Conference in Zamboanga City on April 29-30. In this forum, he declared that the MNLF was returning to its original objective of establishing a separate Bangsamoro Republic. He paid tribute to the continuing struggle of the MILF and its adherence to the line of independence and made it appear that MILF forces participated in the conference. He warned that the MNLF would resume the armed struggle if the Philippine government continued in its failure to implement the Tripoli Agreement.

Misuari hoped that, as it was during the Ramos and Estrada regimes, he would be able to continue putting off the conduct of new ARMM elections by threatening the government into allowing him to remain governor of the region. But the Macapagal-Arroyo regime had already taken advantage of his ouster as MNLF chairperson, the fact that his personal base had dwindled and his loss of power and prestige. Macapagal-Arroyo is now more intrested in using the ARMM to gather support for her reelection in 2004.

The regime used various means to limit Misuari's capacity to maneuver anew. The police raided the house of one of his wives and seized a stash of PNP weapons. The PNP also accused Misuari of keeping a firearms stockpile in Marawi and planning to foment disorder in

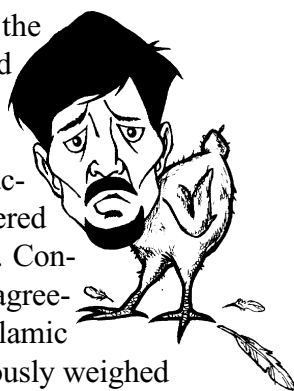
Zamboanga and Lanao del Sur. The AFP and PNP repeatedly harassed MNLF forces under his leadership to challenge them to fight. Misuari indeed fell into the trap as he charged head on to launch an adventurist attack, with large forces of the MNLF suffering major losses in Jolo and in succeeding battles. He has lost the support of Malaysia and is unsure of continued support from the OIC. On November 24, he was arrested by Malaysian authorities in Jampiras, near Sabah, and is now detained in Malaysia.

In the face of the long series of errors, failures and opportunism that had befallen the MNLF under Misuari's leadership, the prestige of the MILF has risen further and shone brighter as the standard bearer of the Bangsamoro struggle against national oppression and for self-determination. This is the result of the MILF's continued and strict advocacy of the fundamental interests of the Moro people and their right to self-determination, its firm advance of armed struggle and its refusal to be deceived in the peace negotiating table or surrender in the face of the government's all-out attacks.

Misuari leaves behind a significant number of forces within his faction in the MNLF. Like their former comrades who had joined the MILF, many of them remain desirous of continuing the struggle against national oppression and for self-determination. Should they pursue that direction now in the face of the failures they had met due to Misuari's bankrupt, opportunist and failed leadership, it would be a welcome development. **AB**

Points on how MNLF-GRP agreements turned out

DUE TO PRESSURE EXERTED BY LIBYA AND THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC Conference (OIC), the Marcos regime and the MNLF signed the Tripoli Agreement at the end of 1976. This instantly confined the MNLF within the framework of "sovereignty and territorial integrity" as defined by the incumbent reactionary government. The MNLF immediately entered into a ceasefire agreement with the government. Consistent with the dictatorship's expectations, the agreement alleviated the pressure being applied by Islamic states on the Marcos government and simultaneously weighed down on the MNLF, stopping the momentum of its resistance.



The agreement centered on the establishment of autonomy in 13 provinces and nine cities in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan. Besides the fact that it was unclear how such an autonomous region was to be established in the defined area, it also remained uncertain how the MNLF was to exercise leadership in areas where the Moro people comprised only a small percentage. In any case, the dictatorship had no plans, and thus did not take any measures, to establish genuine autonomy. In the process of supposedly implementing the agreement, the Marcos regime imposed additional conditions that were absent in the agreement, such as the prior need for a plebiscite to determine which provinces and cities wished to be included in the proposed autonomous region. Marcos established two "special regions" (Regional Autonomous

Government-9 in Central Mindanao and Regional Autonomous Government-12 in Sulu), which were under Malacañang's tight control, were "autonomous" only in name and had no budget of their own, not even nominal legislatures. Marcos did not allow the MNLF to play any role in these "special regions", and instead packed them with former MNLF commanders who had surrendered as well as his Muslim politician cronies. Because of this, the MNLF broke away from the ceasefire accord in 1977 and resumed its armed struggle against the government until the dictatorship's collapse in the first EDSA uprising. But the MNLF was no longer able to regain the momentum of resistance that it had enjoyed prior to the Tripoli Agreement.

There were sporadic talks between the MNLF and the Aquino

regime. Upon the instigation of the OIC, the MNLF and GRP entered into another ceasefire agreement in September 1986. In January 1987, the MNLF dropped its call for sovereignty and submitted itself to the government's program for autonomy. Following a provision in the new government's 1987 constitution, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was established. But when the plebiscite for the latter's establishment was held, only four provinces managed to be included in the autonomous government (Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu and Tawi-tawi). Simultaneous with its talks with the MNLF, the Aquino regime waged a relentless campaign to weaken international support for the MNLF. When the regime successfully blocked the MNLF's entry to the OIC in February 1988, the MNLF officially declared a resumption of armed struggle. Nonetheless, it was no longer able to gain momentum for its resistance.

In 1996, under the Ramos regime and due to pressure from the OIC, the GRP and MNLF entered into an even more watered down version of the Tripoli Agreement.

Macapagal-Arroyo has her own reasons for maneuvering to push Misuari to the wall and ousting him. Foremost among them is her plan to put the ARMM under tight control in preparation for her reelection in 2004.

Misuari's submission to this agreement was a complete and brazen surrender and a betrayal of the Moro people's struggle for self-determination. He accepted leadership over a very limited, and in fact, bogus arrangement for autonomy. He allowed the latter to be limited to the narrow scope of the ARMM, with alleged plans to eventually expand its territory following the results of future plebiscites, until all the 14 provinces (one more had been added due to the division of one of the provinces) and nine cities specified in the Tripoli Agreement shall have been covered. Under the new agreement, the territory was to be called the Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD). In a plebiscite conducted by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime in August, another province and city were added to the ARMM territory with Basilan and Marawi City agreeing to join the ARMM.

Misuari contented himself with being ARMM governor. He shed off whatever remaining pretenses he had of being a revolutionary and ended up being a traditional politician, stealing from the nation's coffers, enriching himself, indulging in an extravagant lifestyle and totally neglecting the people's welfare.

To make it appear that Misuari had power over SZOPAD, Ramos also appointed him chair of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD). Misuari was promised a P20-billion budget to make magic tricks with, but only half of this amount was actually given.

Under the Ramos and Estrada regimes, Misuari was repeatedly able

to prevent the conduct of elections for the ARMM in order to remain as its chairperson. But the Macapagal-Arroyo regime was decided in conducting the polls to oust Misuari and replace him with Parouk Hussin of the Council of 15 (the MNLF's new leadership) after booting out Misuari as MNLF chair.

A few weeks after Misuari's ouster as MNLF chairperson, Malacañang relieved him of his chairmanship over the SPCPD. Muslimin Sema, the MNLF Secretary General under the Council of 15 and also the current mayor of Cotabato City, replaced Misuari.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime coordinates with the Council of 15 through Norberto Gonzales, who chairs the Partido Demokratiko-Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP) and is the president's adviser for "special concerns". The PDSP is a rightist political party that has had a long history of dealing with the MNLF since the Marcos dictatorship.

Macapagal-Arroyo has her own reasons for maneuvering to push Misuari to the wall and ousting him. Foremost among them is her plan to put the ARMM under tight control in preparation for her reelection in 2004. Although the ARMM has a voting population of only a million, the more crucial point is to utilize it as a solid base from which the votes of a large section of the Moro people, even in areas outside the ARMM, could be manipulated. The regime also wants to lure the Moro Islamic Liberation Front into an agreement with the government by accommodating it within the ARMM, along with the new MNLF leadership. ■■

THE ROLLBACK OF OIL PRICES IS WOEFULLY INADEQUATE

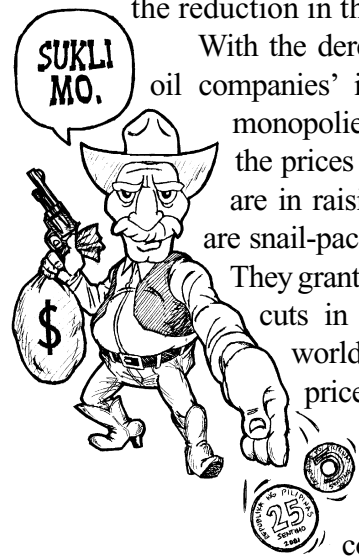
THE PRICE ROLLBACK OF 30 CENTAVOS PER LITER OF GASOLINE AND 20 centavos of diesel fuel this November is hardly sufficient. This was the third price rollback in two months. On October 11, oil companies implemented a 21- to 35-centavo price cut. They again reduced oil prices by 20 to 35 centavos on October 25. However, these niggardly price cuts are a far cry compared to the actual decline of crude oil prices in the world market. Together, they comprise only less than 3% of the overall price of petroleum products.

Crude oil prices in the world market have been dropping due to a slowdown in world industrial production and shrinking markets. Prices have dropped by almost a third since September, from \$25 per barrel to only \$17. Since last year, the price of crude has fallen by 34%, and by 50% since May 2001, when the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries enforced its latest production cutback.

According to the benchmark used by consumerists such as the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, which was based on the formula once used by the defunct ERB, every one-dollar price increase or decrease per barrel of Dubai crude correspondingly results in a 27-centavo price increase or decrease per liter of petroleum products in the country. Likewise, every one-peso increase or decrease in the peso-dollar exchange rate effects a 12-centavo price increase or decrease per liter of petroleum products.

Using this formula, prices of petroleum products should have been rolled back by no less than 60 centavos per liter this November. Since September, oil prices should have been rolled back by more than P2! Even then, these would constitute only 12% of the overall price of oil and constitutes only one-third of the reduction in the price of crude oil.

With the deregulation of the oil industry and the oil companies' insatiable greed for profits, the oil monopolies arbitrarily determine adjustments in the prices of petroleum products. Swift as they are in raising prices whenever they want, they are snail-paced when it comes to reducing prices. They grant such miserly and much-delayed price cuts in anticipation of another increase in world prices of crude oil. If at all, they cut prices only to avoid criticism and shield the deregulation law from attack. Their price cuts have hardly made a dent on the soaring prices of basic commodities and services. **AB**



On Macapagal-Arroyo's direct orders

Militarization intensifies in Southern Tagalog

In its rabid desire to crush the revolutionary movement, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has chosen to launch large-scale and brutal counterrevolutionary suppression campaigns in the Southern Tagalog region. Next to Basilan, Southern Tagalog now has the biggest concentration of military troops. Up to 13 assault battalions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) have been deployed to the region.

At present, there are two Philippine Army (PA) brigades, one task force and a task group assigned to Southern Tagalog.

The 201st Bde covers the third and fourth districts of Quezon and encompasses three battalions—the 74th, 76th and 59th IB.

Joint Task Force Banahaw (JTFB) covers the provinces of Batangas, Laguna, northern and central Quezon and Mindoro island. JTFB, which is led by the notorious fascist Col. Jovito Palparan, serves as the headquarters of the newly formed 204th Bde.

Meanwhile, the 204th Bde covers the islands of Mindoro and Romblon. Macapagal-Arroyo personally gave her all-out support for the large-scale military operations in Mindoro when she visited the island on October 1. Mindoro Oriental now has the biggest deployment of military forces in the region, with up to seven battalions of

the Philippine Army's infantry and special forces—the 16th IB which has recently been pulled out of Mindanao; the 68th IB which came from Pangasinan; the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion which has two companies (2nd SRC and 18th SRC); the 3rd Special Forces Battalion which has two companies (34th SFC and 22nd SFC); the 6th SFC of the 4th Special Forces Battalion and the newly arrived 52nd RECON Company; as well as a company from the 56th IB pulled out from Northern Luzon. Naval Task Force 31 has also been placed under the command of the 204th Bde to provide naval and artillery support for ground assault troops.

In addition, the 3rd SAF Battalion of the PNP is in Mindoro Oriental while the battalion-size Regional Mobile Group is assigned to Mindoro Occidental. Two Philippine Marine battalions have also been deployed to Palawan.

Also recently formed was Task Force Rizaldo under the command of the infamously brutal Col. Efren Orbon of the 1st IB. Under it are three companies from the PA Special Operations Command (SOCOM). Task Group Rizaldo's function is to secure important installations in the region such as the Malampaya Gas Pipeline in Palawan

STRIKING CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN SOUTHERN TAGALOG UNDER THE MACAPAGAL- ARROYO REGIME

Cases	Number of Cases	Number of victims
Violations of IHL	13	13 individuals, 20 communities
Salvaging	9	9 individuals
Indiscriminate firing	5	22 individuals, 12 killed, 5 wounded
Forced disappearance	9	10 individuals
Illegal detention	1	1 individual
Torture	4	4 individuals
Illegal arrest	4	25 individuals
Destruction of property	4	4 families
Theft	3	6 individuals, 1 family
Harassment	16	55 individuals
Illegal search	7	21 households
Mauling	7	11 individuals
Forcible evacuation	1	15 families, 90 individuals
Forcible surrender	1	1 individual



and the Hopewell Coal-Fired Power Plant in Pagbilao, Quezon.

The heavy concentration of reactionary troops and the relentless military operations in Southern Tagalog have resulted in continued violations of human rights. In terms of number and brutality, violations under the Macapagal-Arroyo regime have definitely surpassed those of the deposed Estrada regime.

Within the first eight months of Macapagal-Arroyo's administration, 95 cases of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by Task Force Banahaw and troops of the 201st and 204th Bde have already been documented. Overall, 279 individuals from 24 families and 20 communities were victimized in 63 incidents (*see table*).

But the depth and breadth of the devastation and fear wrought by military terror in Southern Tagalog go beyond this. Death and disease have led to far more casualties

among Mangyan children and infants due to epidemics resulting from a food blockade, relocations and evacuations enforced by Task Force Banahaw and the 204th Bde in the interior villages of Oriental Mindoro, as well as by the absence of medical services from the reactionary government.

Hundreds of internal refugees have also trooped to town centers in Mindoro to escape the large-scale military terror being sown in the island. In Metro Manila, there are now 73 internal refugees, including seven families, 13 women and 15 children.

Even human rights advocates have been victimized by the regime. On November 1, PNP elements harassed and forcibly dispersed 12 members of Task Force Tanggol Karapatan (TFTK) who were conducting a simple program at the North Cemetery in Metro Manila to inform the people about the intense militarization in Southern Tagalog and gather support. TFTK is composed of Kalipunan ng Samahang Magbubukid ng Timog Katagalugan, Karapatan-TK, Bigkis at Lakas ng Katutubo sa Timog Katagalugan and BAYAN-TK.

It is the regime that is responsible for all this—a regime that unbridledly tramples on the people's rights in its desire to stamp out the revolutionary movement. The people must become even more resolute in their resistance to the terrorism being sown by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime and its military forces in the region. **AB**



Reports From

CORRESPONDENTS

Anti-Abu Sayyaf military campaign

Sowing terror in Basilan

Taking after its imperialist master, the Macapagal-Arroyo government is sowing terror in Basilan in the name of the “war against terrorism” targeting and victimizing thousands of ordinary people. The military’s “crackdown” against the Abu Sayyaf is being conducted in a brutal and barbarous manner. It is characterized by widespread bombings, killings, torture, saturation drives, forced evacuation and robbery.

As early as June 2, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime had launched its own terrorist campaign, mobilizing eight battalions in a large-scale “military offensive” against the Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan, Basilan. The bandit group was then holding hostages abducted from a resort in Palawan.

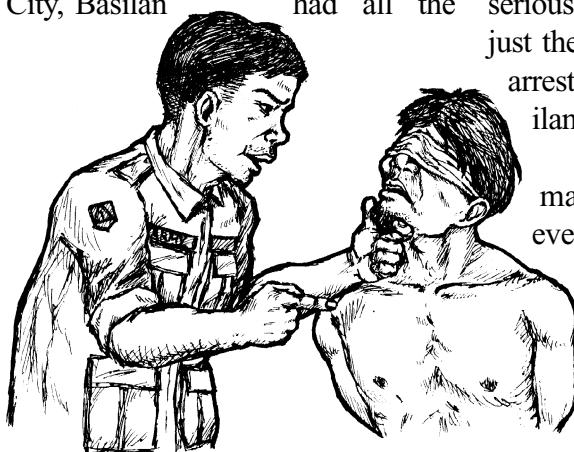
Twenty-three American “advisers” based themselves in Basilan last month to train Filipino troops in the war against “terrorism” and direct operations to rescue two Americans being held hostage by the Abu Sayyaf. During his stopover in Mindanao this November, Adm. Dennis Blair inspected the operations of the AFP in Basilan.

On July 13, the situation in Isabela City, Basilan had all the

makings of the Japanese occupation period, with elements of the 103rd Infantry Brigade, along with masked men identifying supposed Abu Sayyaf supporters or criminals, conducting saturation drives in communities, mosques and places of work.

The military men did not have arrest warrants and instead invoked a Department of Justice memorandum ordering the arrest of all Abu Sayyaf elements and supporters. Those identified were brought to the brigade’s headquarters and were made to sign statements that they were treated well. They were thereafter blindfolded and tortured. They were brought to court three days later and, to their surprise, were charged with kidnapping and serious illegal detention. This was just the beginning of the continuing arrests and torture of people in Basilan.

Basilan is virtually under martial law. There are soldiers everywhere. The only road linking the province’s six towns and one city is teeming with checkpoints. The inspection of belongings and arrest of those who fail



to produce identification papers are commonplace. Even boats bound for Zamboanga are required to have military escorts. Classes had to be halted because schools were converted to AFP barracks. Those that managed to escape destruction from the shellings served as evacuation centers. By declaring a "state of lawlessness" in the province, Macapagal-Arroyo has made official the de facto martial rule.

The 103rd Brigade is the AFP unit assigned to Basilan. The brigade's Task Force Comet, which has been assigned to pursue the Abu Sayyaf, has been divided into three task groups, namely, Task Group Thunder under Col. Hermogenes Esperon; Task Group Lightning under Col. Pedro Ramboanga; and Task Group Tornado under Col. Renato Miranda.

The AFP is closely supported by the CAFGU and the Civilian Volunteer Organization (CVO) which they had organized and armed in the barrios of Basilan. The CAFGU and the CVO are being used to fan the flames of religious and tribal conflicts. They sow mistrust among the people, especially as rewards are being offered to whoever identifies Abu Sayyaf supporters.

The AFP recently deployed three more battalions to supposedly pursue the Abu Sayyaf. But despite the very large number of military troops conducting relentless operations in the island, Macapagal-Arroyo's braggadocio that government forces would crush the supposedly dwindling bandit group has fallen flat. Collusion between the bandit group and the highest-ranking military officials tasked to pursue the Abu Sayyaf has recently been exposed. In exchange for part of the ransom paid the Abu Sayyaf, the officials order their troops to divert their operations away from the bandit group's retreat route. Thus, instead of being crushed, the bandit group continues to operate and has kidnapped and killed even more victims.

But it is really the civilian Moros who bear the brunt of the military operations in Basilan.

According to DSWD records, by September 23, up to 13,421 families (78,736 individuals) had already been forced to evacuate due to the intense military operations in Basilan. Evacuations are taking place in almost every town of the island province. Lamitan, Sumisip and Tuburan towns have the most number of evacuees. According to a fact-finding mission conducted by Karapatan along with 25 other organizations, thousands of people were forced to evacuate when the shelling of Lamitan, Sumisip, Tuburan, Maluso, Tipo-Tipo and Lantawan commenced. There were likewise many cases of looting in the houses deserted by the evacuees.

Suspected Abu Sayyaf supporters are being jailed and tortured. Ten civilians were summarily executed by frenzied troopers. Two managed to survive but were wounded. Almost all of those murdered bore marks of torture such as burns. Worse, most of them had previously been victims of the Abu Sayyaf. **AB**

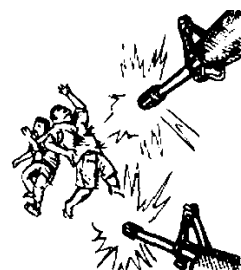


Prominent cases of human rights violations in Basilan

Brutal slaying

Soldiers belonging to the 32nd IB opened fire July 11 at Pilot Hamajin, 26; his brother Roque, 17; their mother Jaang Pulaan, 50 and their father all of Barangay Pipil, Tipo-tipo, Basilan while the family was near their farm in Barangay Camamboringan of the same town. Roque fell first, followed by his mother. His father was shot in the chest while trying to help his wife. Pilot Hamajin went home to ask for help but when he returned with his neighbors, they found only his mother's corpse. They learned that the bodies of his father and brother were taken by helicopter to Zamboanga City and were presented to the media as Abu Sayyaf members slain in battle.

Nuramum Asunum, 27, of Camamboringan was tortured and summarily executed. He was on his way home from the hospital in Lamitan when the jeep he was boarding was stopped at a checkpoint of the 18th IB. He was ordered to get off the vehicle and get inside the detachment where



he was repeatedly punched in the stomach and other parts of his body. A few minutes later, the remaining passengers heard a gunshot. Asunum was suspected of supporting the Abu Sayyaf because he was carrying medicines.

Jasan Linungan, 22, was summarily executed on June 10. He was aboard a passenger jeep bound for Isabela city proper along with Benjie Dilong, 20; Totong Dilong, 18, and Misar Rizal, 23, when soldiers and CAFGU elements conducted an inspection in Barangay Melige of the city. The four were accused of being Abu Sayyaf members. The soldiers shot Linungan who died on the spot. The remaining three were illegally detained for a week in a detachment in Isabela. They were hogtied, burned with cigarettes and wounded in different parts of their body with a knife.

Torture, illegal arrest and detention

Didoy Otong, 26, was picked up at a checkpoint and was tortured to make him confess that he is an Abu Sayyaf member. He was punched in the chest, stomach and the side. The soldiers undressed him and burned his genitals with a lighter. He was brought to the Seaborne Camp in Maluso, Basilan and then forced to drink liquor (*Islam forbids the intake of alcoholic drinks – AB*). When he poured some of it on the concrete floor, they forced him to lap it up. On July 30, they put him on a truck to take him to Tabiawan Brigade Camp in Isabela. While the truck was on its way, they hit him in the back with the butt of a rifle. The next day, he was blindfolded, taken outside the camp, was again being made to confess and was beaten up whenever he refused to answer. He fainted four times due to severe torture.

Abubakar Asalin, 45, a councilor of Barangay Sinangkapan, Tuburan, was blindfolded and was also being made to admit to being an Abu Sayyaf member while he was being beaten up. The soldiers put chili pepper into his armpits and his penis and inserted the latter into a bottle. A bottle was likewise shoved into his anus.

Gafar Mundi, 19, was arrested in July 13 while he was praying in a mosque. The military left him out in the heat of the sun insisting that he was among those who attacked Lamitan. Whenever he refused to confess, he was beaten and kicked. The soldiers made him lie down, poured gasoline on him and threatened to burn him. He was blindfolded and taken by helicopter to Zamboanga City. Along the way, they repeatedly banged his head onto the chopper's wall. They kept whacking his elbows with a piece of wood and his head with a long metal object. **AB**

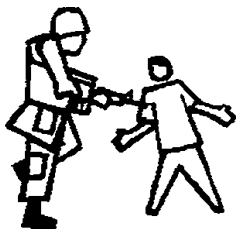
From the Initial Report on the Fact-finding on Human Rights Violations, Relief and Medical Mission, September 9-16, 2001, Basilan



Most intense military operation in Cagayan Valley in half a decade

A large-scale military campaign is currently being waged in southern Isabela involving 20 platoons from the 45th and 54th IB and other troops under the 5th ID. Since October 8, checkpoints have been set up and troops have been combing through the towns of Jones, San Agustin, San Guillermo and Echague. Vehicles as well as peasants' huts are continually ransacked on the hilarious pretext that these are all part of the "anti-terrorism campaign" and "search operations against Abu Sayyaf elements". The current large-scale campaign involving both special operations teams and strike operations is the biggest military operation launched in the Cagayan Valley region since the latter part of the 1990s.

The military operations concentrated in southern Isabela are aimed at suppressing the militancy displayed by the people in resisting anti-peasant, deceptive and destructive projects. Among the latter are mining operations conducted by Royal Cement Mining Corp. on almost 24,000 hectares of land in Barangay Dicamay



I, Dicamay II, Sto. Domingo and Duma-wing in Jones; the Integrated Social Forestry Project, where farms of poor peasants are declared “public lands”, seized and planted with Gmelina; landgrabbing involving a thousand-hectare coffee plantation owned by Nestlé Corporation in Jones; and the field testing of Bt-corn by Monsanto, a giant agribusiness corporation, on a 1,700-square meter lot in Barangay Diarao, Jones.

The enemy likewise wants to douse cold water on successful agrarian revolution cam-paigns and growing people’s actions against militarization, the setting up of CAFGU units and violations of human rights. In Octo-ber, organized peasants exposed and fought against despotic Jones mayor Jesus Sebas-tian’s collusion with the military to build a Philippine Army camp in Barangay Dibuluan. Residents of Jones likewise condemned the disruption of their children’s studies due to the military’s conversion of schoolbuild-ings into camps. They assailed rampant mili-tary abuses such as the imposition of quotas on villagers in setting up military camps and detachments; theft by soldiers of the masses’ farm animals; and the troops’ refusal to pay for goods bought from village stores.

In the barrio of Villabello, Jones alone, at least 24 cases of human rights violations were documented in November due to the large-scale military operations. The most strik-ing cases include the abduction and mauling on October 22 of Willy Lumaho and Tomas Vanhan, both residents of Sitio Germitan, by elements of the 45th IB; and the torture and forcible use as guides of three youths from Villabello—Jerwin Maltezo, Feli and Romulo Ariola—by the same troops, also in October.

Fearing an investigation by members of a fact-finding mission that arrived in Villabello on November 5, the 45th IB transferred its tacti-cal command post to Benguet. Three platoons that were then in Villabello to serve as strike forces were likewise transferred to the adjoining villages of Madadamian and Mabbayad. **AB**



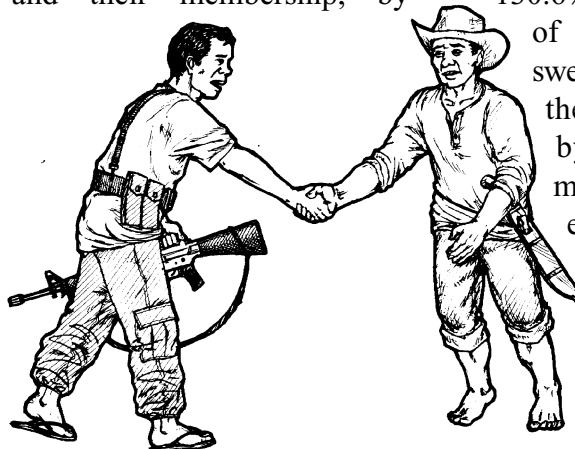
The revolutionary movement grows in Catanduanes

When the people’s army becomes one with the masses

October 1997. The Bicol region was at the threshold of renewed advance as a result of the Second Great Rectifica-tion Movement when, for the very first time, the New People’s Army (NPA) was able to successfully deploy semilegal teams in the province of Catanduanes. Soon after, an increasing number of Catanduanons had embraced the NPA. In the NPA, the people found hope and an ally in their desire and deter-mination to change their utterly exploitative and impover-ished conditions. The NPA grew swiftly and was cherished by the masses all the more through its perseverance in intro-ducing itself and arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people. Revolutionary struggle in the province continued to gain strength and expand despite attempts by reactionary forces to quell it.

THREE YEARS LATER, THE REVOLUTIONARY MASS BASE CONTINUED TO expand. From 1999 to 2000, the number of peasant organiz-ing groups increased by 26%. The number of women’s groups increased by 65% and their membership, by 59%. Meanwhile, the number of youth groups grew by 109% and their membership, by 130.6%. The number

of student groups swelled by 600%, and their membership by 500%. The membership of fish-erfolk’s groups also increased by 75%. Orga-nizing commit-tees are being formed from the most advanced



organizing groups.

During this period, the number of barrios covered by NPA operations expanded by 19.5%. At the same time, the NPA addressed problems involving the dwindling membership or the dissolution altogether of some organizing groups as peasants are sometimes forced to move to other areas in search of employment, or drop out due to the enemy's counterrevolutionary psywar operations or some weaknesses of comrades.

This year, the NPA registered a 33% increase in its personnel. New NPA recruits now come from the ranks of local mass activists. There are efforts to ensure that their direct participation in the armed struggle is continually developed and sustained. Because of these advances, the Party is expected to enjoy a further increase in membership.

THE NPA AND REVOLUTIONARY MASSES WORK HAND IN hand in the initial implementation of the minimum program of agrarian revolution in the province. There is a continuing effort to deepen the masses' grasp of agrarian revolution. *Luyo-luyo* or agricultural mutual aid teams are set up to accomplish tasks ranging from the simple matter of weaving coconut leaves for various uses to the more complex task of constructing canals and irrigation systems to service several farms, which may have a combined area of from 10 to 50 hectares. Farmworkers form unions. Revolutionary forces take the lead in seed and animal collection and dispersal by way of mass campaigns.

In this manner, the masses are able to survive their miserable state caused by the dwindling prices of *bandala* (abaca), *tambo* (material for native brooms), coconuts and bananas—the sale of these items comprise their usual source of livelihood. In this way, too, they are able to resist the oppressive conditions they have to endure in their search for alternative means of livelihood. Those who become farmworkers receive slave wages. Those who resort to fishing are edged out by huge trawlers and motorized *bancas*. Those who opt to make charcoal and are forced to make clearings in public lands are driven out to give way to govern-

ment “reforestation projects” and are prohibited from tilling lands abandoned by hacenderos.

WITH THE PRESENCE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY FORCES NOW posing a threat to reaction, military operations have been intensified in Catanduanes and have become an added burden to the farmers. In barangays Tucao and Maysuram in Caramoran, for example, *parahagot* or abaca workers have been forced to leave their homes in fear of soldiers conducting operations.

PNP forces, previously the only troops deployed in the province, have now been augmented with Philippine Army forces. Together, they carry out the old tactic of “clear, hold and consolidate” in areas they have identified as NPA areas of operation. They first form an intelligence network within a village and beef up their defenses. Simultaneously, they conduct combat and psywar operations. They sow fear and terror in the countryside. They also distribute pamphlets and conduct all-out propaganda

over the radio and in newspapers to discredit the movement. They propagate the line that “the province of Catanduanes was peaceful until the NPA came in”.

The people have waged resistance by forming groups to defend and uphold human rights. For its part, the NPA in Catanduanes has drafted guidelines to counter the pattern of enemy movements. The guidelines put stress on the consolidation of the people's army, the masses and allies and on close adherence to the correct political line as well as regulations, rules of discipline and policies.

Tactical offensives have also been launched by the NPA in Catanduanes. Two notorious policemen guilty of crimes against the people and the revolutionary movement were meted the death penalty. In July 2000, a defensive action was transformed into an offensive when an NPA unit successfully broke out of an encirclement by a unit from the PNP Provincial Office and Regional Mobile Group.

WITH THE SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT OF A GUERRILLA front in Catanduanes, the revolutionary movement now covers all of the Bicol provinces. **AB**

Anecdotes behind *some* tactical offensives in Bicol

Each tactical offensive carried out by the New People's Army is a result of the successful cooperation between the masses and Red fighters. Behind the usual details—the date, place, reactionary force targeted by the NPA, number of arms seized – are remarkable stories of the Philippine revolution. Here are a few narratives culled from the rich experience of comrades in the Bicol region.

Special tactical offensive in Barangay Sta. Elena, Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte; December 28, 2000. Residents of Sta. Elena expressed happiness when the NPA meted out punishment on Francisco “Ike” Villafuerte and Anatolio “Hudas” Villablanca, two rabid reactionaries with crimes against the people. Villafuerte, a despotic landlord and agent of the Military Intelligence Group, was responsible for establishing intelligence networks, torturing and killing innocent farmers. Villablanca, meanwhile, was a former policeman of Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte, a rabid counterrevolutionary agent and business associate of a drug syndicate in the area.

An NPA platoon disguised as soldiers in complete camouflage flagged down two jeepneys and asked to be transported to the entrance of a road that leads to the residence of the two targets. A team of comrades quickly established a checkpoint.

An NPA section then went straight to Villafuerte's residence. His

unknowing wife ushered them in. The NPA speedily carried out the punitive action. Three .45s, combat boots and Villafuerte's other military equipment were seized. Outside, comrades patiently explained to the people why Villafuerte was punished. They also distributed hundreds of leaflets explaining the basis of such punishment. Since the town is still not within the comrades' area of responsibility, some people were frightened. However, the majority listened carefully and acclaimed them.

Meanwhile, another formation of the same NPA troops proceeded straight to Villablanca's house and swiftly carried out the punitive action. Simultaneously, another NPA team raided two policemen's houses nearby and confiscated one .357 and other military equipment.

The masses carefully read the leaflets distributed by the NPA. They warmly welcomed the comrades. Some of the barriofolk even alternated in manning the comrades' temporary checkpoint and eventually distributed leaflets themselves. When the jeepney drivers

realized that they ferried Red fighters, they decided to wait and volunteered to transport the NPA anywhere they requested.

The successful operation paved the way for the return and continuous organizing work of the people's army in the area.

Raid on the Caramoan Municipal Hall, Camarines Sur; November 18, 2000. “Long live the comrades! Long Live the CPP/NPA!” rang the vigorous chants of the masses for the Red fighters marching from a successful raid on the town hall. The element of surprise was well utilized in this raid. A policeman and one CAFGU element were killed and two others were wounded. A number of high-powered firearms were also confiscated.

The success of this tactical offensive by the NPA was a big blow to the AFP. Prior to this, the fascists had boasted that they had cleared the area of the NPA. Troops from the 42nd IB and the 18th Scout Ranger Company had just scoured the Caramoan mountain ranges and adjoining towns. With the help and support of the masses and some allied elements in the AFP, the NPA effectively avoided the enemy. They patiently waited for the right moment, and made the well-funded intelligence and combat operations of the AFP senseless and ridiculous.

Raid on the Gainza town hall, Camarines Sur; April 27, 2001. The NPA successfully proved it could launch a tactical offensive in an area close to a city. The Gainza town proper is surrounded by vast plains and a big river and is a mere 10-minute

ride from Naga City. An NPA platoon had earlier positioned itself around the town hall for 30 minutes before actually commencing with the offensive. The Red fighters, dressed only in shorts and T-shirts, were able to approach and enter the town hall without difficulty. They were able to conceal their long and short firearms inside *bayongs* (woven baskets) containing coconut graters and coconuts, sacks containing *gabi*, baskets with banana leaves and such. Some posed as couples applying for marriage licenses at the town hall, and others loitered at stores nearby.

The two policemen, including the town police chief, were rendered helpless when the guerrillas attacked the PNP station. Three M16s, one 9 mm, RPGs, magazines, uniforms, a printer, computers, two mobile phones, two base radios, one portable and two hand-held VHF radios were seized in the raid. Fire-



arms were also confiscated from the nearby houses of two policemen some 100 meters from the town hall.

After a little more than 10 minutes of executing the tactical offensive, the comrades withdrew safely. A squad retreated through the vast rice field (which entailed a five-hour trek before they could reach a forested mountain) while the rest proceeded to the major river flowing towards San Miguel Bay. They followed the sea route contrary to what the authorities predicted. The enemy failed to pursue the Red fighters who effectively blended and “disappeared” among the masses harvesting rice.

Apart from conducting intelligence work for about two months before the raid on the Gainza town hall, NPA members were able to establish new contacts with

the help of mass activists from consolidated areas. All through the months of expanding contacts, mobilizing the masses for intelligence work and preparing for the tactical offensive, the plan was a well-kept secret.

Ambush of PNP troops at Sitio Dilingkwente, Barangay Kitang, Pasacao, Camarines Sur; October 24, 2000. The area had long been unattended by the comrades. Nonetheless, the NPA was able to successfully carry out a tactical offensive in the area. Sixteen guerrillas and three militia members waited in ambush in an unpopulated area. Two civilians accidentally ran into the NPA formation but the operation remained a secret. On the second day, a PNP patrol car boarded by the two notorious policemen who were the targets of the operation passed by. They were killed instantly. Two 9 mm revolvers and other military equipment were seized by the guerrillas.

The masses were delighted with the successful conduct of the offensive. They confirmed that the two targets were involved in salvaging, were drunkards and were fond of running amok and firing their guns indiscriminately. To show their elation, the masses even recommended other targets for punishment by the people’s army. The warm welcome given by the masses served as the stepping-stone for the comrades’ return and the advance of mass work in the area.

Ambush of the Bravo Coy, 31st IB at Sitio Patag, Barangay San Isidro, San Lorenzo Ruiz, Camarines Norte; October 10, 2000. The destruction of an armored personnel carrier (APC) and the seizure of caliber .50 and caliber .30 machine guns constituted a big breakthrough for an NPA platoon. The APC, carrying 18 troops of the B Coy of the 31st IB was destroyed with the use of land mines. Two enemy troopers were killed, six were wounded and ten others scampered while firing away aimlessly backwards. These enemy troops were entrapped by comrades when a squad-size NPA group harassed a squad-size detachment tasked with guarding the PNOC. Expectedly, the troops sent by the 31st IB’s main body to reinforce the soldiers under attack were ambushed by the NPA. Aside from the machine guns, the NPA also seized an M16 rifle, hundreds of ammunition for .50 and .30 machine guns and one URC radio. **AB**

The new puppet fascist regime and US imperialism's strategic interests in Afghanistan

This November, after Taliban and al Qaeda forces deserted Afghanistan's cities, US and United Kingdom (UK) imperialism placed Rabbani, leader of the Northern Alliance, as acting head. The US and UK want to use the new government to protect their strategic interests in Afghanistan and Central Asia. At the same time, using the pretext of "going after bin Laden", the US has positioned 1,500 regular troops inside Afghan-

ethnic strife which potentially endangers US strategic interests in Afghanistan. To render legitimacy and expand the coalition behind the new regime and to make it an effective instrument of imperialism, the US has sponsored a conference of various anti-Taliban forces in Germany. The conference is being bandied about as the instrument of unity among diverse ethnic groups in Afghanistan. But unity is hard to build especially with the difficult time the US and UK are having in getting a leader with the ability to influence and lead the Pashtun tribe. This tribe, the largest in Afghanistan, is the Taliban's base.



REAL INTENTIONS. In partnership with the UK, US imperialism launched a "war against terrorism" in an effort to impose its economic, political and military hegemony over Afghanistan. Widespread bombing coupled with instigation of ethnic or religious war was also the strategy used by the US in its Balkan and Middle East wars.

The US uses the continuing pursuit of Osama bin Laden (and its failure to catch or kill him) to justify its maintenance of troops in Afghanistan. US and UK imperialism have also positioned their troops in Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

By placing their own puppet and fascist government in Afghanistan, US and UK imperialism are securing the country as a base from which to extend their influence and control in Central Asia and its rich oil resources. This region is called the "new Middle East" because here could be found—along the coast of the Caspian Sea and in the Caucasus area—the richest untapped oil reserves in the world.

From here, the US will be able to further monopolize the delivery of oil and gas through a pipeline extending from Central Asia to the Mediterranean and other parts of Asia. The US currently has a monopoly of the Central Asia-Turkey-Mediterranean route for the

istan to prop up the new regime. The UK also plans to deploy about 5,000 troops inside Afghanistan, apart from American and British special forces already in the country. Russia has also sent a few hundred troops to Afghanistan under the guise of conducting "humanitarian work".

Conditions remain unstable because of continuing

supply of gas and oil to Europe and other parts of Asia. With its control of Afghanistan, the US will have a new and exclusive oil route from Central Asia, enabling it to deliver oil to other parts of Asia more easily and cheaply via the Indian Ocean. This will completely preempt Russia, China and Iran's long-standing plans to build their own pipelines from Central Asia to the Mediterranean and other parts of Asia. The US intends to keep European and Asian markets dependent on the US for their oil needs.

Even now, imperialist troops are already strategically positioned to begin and secure the pipeline-laying project. The pipeline will start from Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, pass through Afghanistan, and extend to Pakistan and India. American monopoly corporations have already invested up to \$30 billion dollars for the right to monopolize the extraction, processing and supply of oil from Central Asia.

But other European and Asian powers also have interests in Afghanistan.

Russia has endorsed the "anti-terrorism" war in exchange for the US' withdrawal of support to Islamic groups in Chechnya that have long been fighting Russia. Nevertheless, Russia is prepared to counter any plan by the US and UK to completely monopolize oil supplies from Central Asia. For a much longer period in history, this region of the world has formed part of the Russian empire and remains an object of Russia's interest. **AB**

NEWS



1 SOLDIER KILLED, 4 WOUNDED IN SURIGAO SUR AMBUSH

A soldier of the 62nd IB was killed and three others were wounded in an ambush staged by Red fighters in Hatuan, Surigao del Sur on November 24. Another soldier, Cpl. Alex Nuvillo, was captured and released on November 27. He was released to representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The soldiers were ambushed after they were ordered to pursue the Red fighters who launched a punitive action against the Paper Industries Corp. of the Philippines (PICOP) that same day. The NPA scorched two dump trucks owned by the company. This was in punishment for the cruelty of PICOP against its workers and farmers residing within its concession. According to the NPA, hundreds of workers were laid off by PICOP. The company also demolished the houses of farmers, uprooted their crops and destroyed their farms.

2 SOLDIERS KILLED IN NPA AMBUSH IN ILOCOS SUR

Two soldiers of the 50th IB were killed and two were wounded in an ambush launched by the NPA on November 19 in Barangay Maratodo, Magsingal, Ilocos Sur. The soldiers were conducting foot patrol when ambushed by the Red fighters.

NPA RAIDS PNP STATION IN WESTERN SAMAR

The NPA raided a Philippine National Police (PNP) station in the town hall of San Jose de Buan, Western Samar, at dawn on November 17.

The NPA at once disarmed and temporarily arrested the two policemen guarding the station. The guerrillas confiscated three M16 rifles, one cal. 38, six rifle grenades, 15 short M16 magazines and 1,880 rounds of ammunition for M16.

The two policemen were immediately released after talks with the Red fighters.

Meanwhile, the NPA punished two incorrigible PNP intelligence operatives that same day.

NPA PUNISHES FORMER POLICEMAN IN RIZAL

The NPA-Narciso Antazo Aramil Command punished Leonardo Santos, former element of the Philippine Constabulary, on November 14.

At around 10:00 in the morning, Red fighters blocked Santos' car along Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal. After carrying out the punitive action, the guerrillas left a statement, which enumerated Santos' crimes against the movement and the people.

He grabbed ancestral lands from minority groups and was involved in many operations wherein leaders of militant groups were executed. He was also a rabid operative of the AFP's 2nd ID based in Tanay, Rizal.

SUCCESSFUL TACTICAL OFFENSIVES LAUNCHED IN SOUTHERN MINDANAO

Successful military actions were consecutively launched in Southern Mindanao this November. No less than 27 high-powered firearms were confiscated and 19 reactionary forces were killed in separate tactical offensives by the New People's Army in the region this month.

Ambush in Cateel. Eighteen soldiers were killed on November 10 and 21 high-powered firearms were seized by the NPA when they ambushed the 27th Special Forces Company troops of the AFP in Spar Dos, Aliwagwag, Cateel, Davao Oriental. Eleven more soldiers were wounded in the ambush.

At around 12:30 in the afternoon, the NPA detonated a land mine against the truck carrying the troops. They were on their way to reinforce their fellow soldiers who had earlier encountered Red fighters.

Disarming at Pantukan. On November 3, Red fighters successfully disarmed police and CAGU elements in a PNP detachment in Panganason, Pantukan, Compostela Valley.

The NPA attacked the detachment at dawn. The enemy was made to surrender and the guerrillas confiscated five M16 rifles, one carbine, one hand-held radio, one VHF base radio and three cellular phones. Elements of the Pantukan Police, 1102nd Police Mobile Group and 60th IB of the AFP attempted but failed to reinforce their fellow troopers, because the NPA retreated immediately and safely.

Punitive action against telecommunications companies. Four telecommunications facilities were scorched by the NPA in Compostela Valley on November 12 at around 6:30 in the evening. The Red fighters destroyed the facilities of the Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co., Philcom, Liberty Telecoms and Dole Philippines. These companies were punished for refusing to pay revolutionary taxes.

The facilities were all located in Barangay Tuburan, Mawab. Despite being only a kilometer or two away from the camp of the 701st Army Brigade, the latter's troops were not able to come to the rescue of the companies.

Punitive action against an undesirable element. Due to his long record of actively conspiring with the government and other bad elements against the revolutionary movement, the NPA punished barangay councilor Mario Capillan of Barangay Panangalan, Davao Oriental. The punishment was carried out in Sitio Languan, Barangay San Roque, New Bataan, Compostela Valley on November 4.

NPA DESTROYS CELL SITES IN CENTRAL LUZON

The NPA destroyed cell sites in four Central Luzon provinces on November 10 and 11. This was carried out as punishment for the stubborn refusal of Globe and Smart to pay taxes to the revolutionary movement.

The Red fighters scorched cell sites in Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pampanga and Bataan. Damage to facilities was estimated at P100 million.

The Globe cell site in Abucay, Bataan, was destroyed at around 5:30 in the afternoon; the Smart cell site in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija was attacked at around 8:55 in the evening. This was followed by the scorching of a Piltel cell site in Lubao, Pampanga. The Smart cell site in Barangay Tibag, Tarlac City, still under construction, was attacked past midnight on November 11. No one was hurt in the attacks.

PUNITIVE ACTIONS LAUNCHED IN NORTH COTABATO

The Magtanggol Roque Command (MRC) of the North Cotabato NPA punished Binao Amolo, Zaldy Loma and Nonoy Aniñon, all of Makilala, in separate actions in October and November.

According to MRC spokesperson Ka Ricardo Benjamin, the three were proven by the people's court to be guilty of rape, murder and theft.

Amolo, a resident of Barangay Malasila, was punished on October 7. Loma, a resident of New Bulatukan, was punished on November 8. Aniñon, also of Barangay Malasila, was punished on November 11.



NEWS

ZAMBOANGA FARMERS BLOCK MINING OPERATIONS

Farmers from Barangay Dalapan, San Miguel, Zamboanga del Sur successfully blocked mining operations of A Dynasty Multipurpose Cooperative on October 3.

The company planned to extract marble and bentonite reserves from more than 2,000 hectares or nine barangays in San Miguel and Guipos towns when more than 100 peasants erected camps on the areas to be mined.

The farmers' continued protests inspired the formation of many sectoral and multisectoral alliances against the mining operations. On October 3, the plan of A Dynasty to begin drilling operations was blocked because the protesters were able to prevent the entry of A Dynasty's drilling equipment.

REGIONAL PEASANT ALLIANCE LAUNCHED IN CORDILLERA

The founding congress of the Alyansa Dagiti Pesante iti Taeng Kordilyera (APIT Kordilyera), a Cordillera-wide peasant alliance, was held from October 15-17. APIT Kordilyera is now the newest chapter of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

The congress was attended by 217 delegates representing 116 peasant organizations from all of the six provinces of Cordillera – Apayao, Kalinga, Abra, Mt. Province, Ifugao and Benguet. Also present were around 49 representatives from five non-government organizations that focus on the advocacy of issues and struggles of peasants, and six observers from the Cordillera People's Alliance. The event was sponsored by the Itogon-Inter-Barangay Alliance (IIB-A), an alliance of people persistently resisting the construction of the destructive San Roque Multi-Purpose Dam in Itogon, Benguet.

The congress forged a 13-point program to fight the oppression and exploitation of farmers and national minorities of the Cordillera and to promote their fundamental and immediate interests.

TRIBAL FILIPINO WEEK CELEBRATIONS HELD

Tribal Filipino Week was celebrated on two separate occasions in October.

On October 14, Peasant Day and Tribal Filipino Week were simultaneously commemorated by more than 100 farmers, students, church workers and professionals from the uplands and plains of Abra. It was spearheaded by the Kakailyan Salakniban Tay Amin a Nagtaudan (Let Us All Defend Our Nativeland or KASTAN), an alliance of various people's mass organizations in Abra.

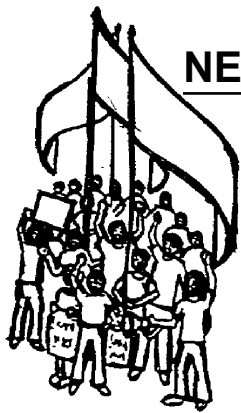
During the occasion, the aggressive implementation of destructive projects in Abra and in the

entire regions of Ilocos and Cordillera by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime, was opposed. The 503rd Brigade was repudiated as an instrument in the fascist and deceptive design to implement these inimical projects.

On October 5, around 150 Cordillerans and their supporters in Manila gathered to "reaffirm the Cordillera people's struggle for self-determination and their oneness with the Filipino people in aspiring for freedom, justice and peace." The occasion was highlighted by a celebration of indigenous cultural presentations. The long history of the Cordil-

lera people's valiant struggles was reviewed. Among these were the Tingguian struggle against the Cellophil Resources Corporation in the 1970s and the Bontoc and Kalinga resistance against the imperialist Chico Dam project, which cost the life of hero Macliling Dulag.

The state of the continuing struggle of the Cordillera people against destructive projects such as mega dams and large-scale mining and deceptive schemes such as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act and the National Integrated Protected Areas System, was also discussed.



NEWS

FIRST MIGRANTS' CONFERENCE HELD

The very first conference of migrants was held in Manila on November 5-7. The meeting was entitled "International Migrants Conference on Forced Labor Export and Forced Migration Amidst Globalization". It was sponsored by Migrante, Gabriela, Contak Philippines and Asia-Pacific Mission for Migrant Filipinos.

Present in the conference were representatives from the ranks of migrant workers, migrants, political refugees and other nationalities forced to flee their respective countries. Pakistan, Turkey, Bangladesh, Nepal and Indonesia, other than the Philippines, were some of the countries that sent delegates to the conference.

The conference was launched in order to gather major migrants' formations from various countries. Key speakers like Prof. Jose Maria Sison, general consultant of the International League of Peoples Struggles, Atty. Romeo Capulong, head of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines committee on migrant affairs, and Antonio Tujan, executive director of IBON Database, discussed the problems confronting migrants. Among the topics discussed were wage cuts and other forms of exploitation against migrant workers, importation of cheap labor by means of human smuggling, the US' war of aggression against Central Asia and the Middle East and problems confronting seafarers and political refugees.

YOUTH CONFERENCE IN METRO MANILA CONDUCTED

A Youth Conference in Metro Manila was held on October 20. The conference discussed the situation of the country's youth and their part in forging a progressive society. It was attended by hundreds of youth from various organizations, colleges, universities, parishes and communities in Metro Manila.

Progressive video and cultural shows were presented during the conference. The most significant part was the signing of the "Statement of Unity and Principles" by all participants. It described the severe poverty in Metro Manila and exposed the regime's brazen treachery on the issue of a just wage increase for workers and government employees. The regime's all-out support for the US-led war against Afghanistan was condemned.

Based on this, they declared support for the demand for a P125 across-the-board nationwide wage increase for workers and a P3,000 across-the-board salary increase for teachers and government employees; the demand for the dismantling of regional wage boards; and opposition to the Macapagal-Arroyo regime's all-out support of the "counter-terrorist war" as well as support for the urban poor's campaigns against demolition.

INCREASE IN PGH FEES OPPOSED

More than 250 doctors, health workers and students of medicine launched a two-hour picket and noise barrage on November 12 in front of the Philippine General Hospital to oppose the increase in the public hospital's fees.

The protesters criticized PGH

Memorandum No. 01-13 which changes and increases fees charged for more than 40 laboratory procedures and hospital supplies. A doctor explained, "This will only worsen the already miserable health conditions of our patients."

The protesters burned a symbolic moneybag filled with bombs to emphasize the government's budgetary priority for the military while disregarding the welfare of the impoverished people and passing on to them the burden of exorbitant fees.

ANTI-IMPERIALIST PROTESTS WAGED IN CLARK AND NEW YORK

The arrival on November 14 of six US F-18 bomber jets that refueled at the Clark Special Economic Zone before proceeding to Afghanistan in the name of the “counter-terrorist” war was met with protests. This marked the beginning of a series of militant groups’ anti-war protests that are to be held until December 10.

More than 400 rallyists led by the Promotion of Church People’s Response gathered at the Clark entrance. They vehemently opposed the Arroyo regime’s participation in the US-led war. “Joining this war is also engaging in terrorist activity,” they said.

Since November 4, up to 23 US military airplanes had refueled in Clark for the US’ war of aggression.

Meanwhile, scores of Filipinos and Americans launched a protest action before the Philippine Consulate in New York on November 18. The mass action was held in time with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s trip to the US to forge deals with her master concerning terrorist and anti-people policies.

OPPOSE THE WTO! – ILPS

The International League of Peoples Struggles (ILPS) is one with the Filipino people in the cry to “Intensify the fight against imperialist plunder! Junk the World Trade Organization (WTO)!”

The ILPS expressed its support when protest actions were held in the Philippines in opposition to the WTO summit held in Qatar from November 9-13. According to the ILPS, all that the WTO achieved during the last five years was the destruction of the economies of oppressed nations, the demise of local industries, the ruin of agriculture and food security, the dislocation of millions of peasants and farm workers and the worsening poverty of the toiling masses.

The ILPS pledged total support to what it viewed as positive signs of increasing awareness of the peoples of the world – the mounting resistance to imperialist globalization in various parts of the world, such as the reaction shown by various nationalities to the US war of aggression against Afghanistan.

DONATO CONTINENTE’S RELEASE DEMANDED

Human rights advocates and other supporters demanded the immediate release of Donato Continente. He and Juanito Itaas were wrongly accused of, and forced to admit to the killing in 1989 of Col. James Rowe, official of the Joint US-RP Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG).

Continente and Itaas were sentenced to life imprisonment in February 1991 and had served their minimum sentence by October 2001. However, they remain imprisoned in accordance with US imperialist dictates. US Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific, Thomas Hubbard himself, went straight to Macapagal-Arroyo in March 2001 to order the removal of the names of Continente and Itaas from the list of political prisoners set for release.

MACAPAGAL-ARROYO CONTINUES TO OBSTRUCT NDFP AND GRP PEACE TALKS

The Macapagal-Arroyo Regime continues to hinder the peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP. This, despite the earlier agreement between the NDFP and the GRP to conduct the next round of talks on December 10-14, hold the first meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee, continue the discussion on social and economic reforms and for both sides to take goodwill and confidence-building measures, such as the GRP’s release of political detainees and the NDFP’s release of its prisoners. These agreements were arrived at through back-channel talks.

Macapagal-Arroyo persistently uses as pretext the NDFP’s refusal to stop what the GRP labels as “political assassinations”. According to NDFP panel chair Luis Jalandoni, however, the NDFP implements “arrest orders released by democratic organs of political power for those charged with criminal cases against the people, and who are under the jurisdiction of the people’s government according to the justice and legal processes of the revolutionary movement and according to international humanitarian ►



NEWS

U. S. AND RP FORGING NEW MILITARY AGREEMENT

A new military agreement is being arranged under wraps by the US and the Philippines. This November, secret negotiations to finalize the Mutual Logistics Sharing Agreement (MLSA) were held between the military officials of Bush and Macapagal-Arroyo's government. The MLSA plans to activate an "inter-operability" coordination (a euphemism for joint military operations) between the US and the AFP. The regime also intends to sign it as a bilateral executive order to skirt any opposition from a senate ratification.

According to reports, the MLSA will provide access rights to US troops that would allow unrestricted use of all ports and facilities of the Philippines. Furthermore, US military forces will be allowed transit rights and prolonged stay in the country. Essentially, this devious agreement revives the Military Bases Agreement abrogated in 1991. It would accelerate the international military strategy of the US to position its troops in the Asia-Pacific and other areas for quick deployment.

◀ law." Jalandoni said that the more important reason behind the talks' suspension was Macapagal-Arroyo's desire and that of the militarists behind her to prioritize and pursue concentrated military operations against the NPA.

EXPOSÉS OF MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S CORRUPTION CONTINUE

There are continuing exposés of Macapagal-Arroyo's corruption. The deal between Macapagal-Arroyo and Marcos crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco regarding the coco levy funds has reaped criticism from all sides. Among those criticizing her are organizations and groups, which used to be allied with Macapagal-Arroyo during EDSA 2. Macapagal-Arroyo and Cojuangco agreed that the P130-billion coco levy funds (tax collected from the sale of copra) shall remain private and in the hands of Cojuangco and Maria Clara Lobregat (chairperson of the Philippine Coconut Producers' Federation or COCOFED.) Because these funds were collected from taxes paid by coconut farmers from 1973 to 1982, the farmers claim ownership over them. To placate the farmers, P50 billion from these funds shall be allotted as a COCOFED-managed trust fund allegedly for the rehabilitation of the coconut industry. According to the People's Consultative Assembly, Macapagal-Arroyo is set to gain P20 billion from this deal. Also according to the PCA, Macapagal-Arroyo earned around P3 billion in exchange for the non-continuance of the case against Lucio Tan. Macapagal-Arroyo also allegedly raked in \$16 million from the controversial IMPSA deal wherein Sec. Hernani Perez of the Department of Justice was implicated.

The People's Consultative Assembly is one of the groups that actively supported Macapagal-Arroyo during EDSA 2. The PCA started castigating the regime when it exposed the alleged corruption of first gentleman Miguel Arroyo.

Meanwhile, businessman Pacifico Marcelo revealed that Macapagal-Arroyo demanded control over the majority interest (51%) of his company, Philippine Communications Clearinghouse, Inc. (PCCI). According to its concept, PCCI would become a center through which all transactions from various communication networks shall pass. It is expected to earn an estimated \$1.1 billion annually from only 20% of all call transactions. According to Marcelo, all his contracts were cancelled after Arroyo insisted that her camp, and not PCCI, should establish this type of clearinghouse.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS PLUNDER LAW

A heavy load was taken off the minds of worried democratic forces and the people when the Supreme Court rejected on November 19 the motion filed by Estrada questioning the plunder law. According to Estrada's lawyers, the law is ambiguous and unconstitutional, and thus violates the right to due process. With a vote of 10 to deny the motion, four to approve and ▶

IMELDA CONFIRMS MARCOS-TAN TIE-UP

For the first time, Imelda Marcos has revealed that her dictator husband, Ferdinand Marcos, was the true owner of most of the companies of Lucio Tan, including Foremost Farms, Inc., Asia Brewery, Inc., Fortune Tobacco Corp., Himmel Industries, and Shareholdings Inc., the holding company for all these companies.

Prior to this, Imelda only admitted that Marcos was able to acquire an interest in Tan's companies. In her new revelation, Imelda said that Marcos and Tan conspired in dividing their wealth.

According to her, the dictator and Tan agreed during the latter part of the 1980s to consolidate their interests in various businesses under one company named Shareholdings, Inc. According to the deal, a 60-40 wealth sharing agreement was made in favor of the Marcoses. Three holding companies (which managed the interests of their owners in various other companies) were formed: two to manage Marcos' interests and one for Tan.

◀ one abstention, the Supreme Court agreed to the constitutionality of the law. Thus, father and son Joseph and Jinggoy Estrada shall remain detained without bail, and if proven guilty of plundering P50 million or more, they may yet be sentenced to death.

Meanwhile, the trial of the Estradas plods along slowly, is disorderly and full of gimmickry. Various requests, drama, gimmicks and maneuvers are being made left and right by the Estradas in order to further delay and obstruct the trial, in the hope that it would be overtaken by changes in the political situation that would be more favorable to them. The father and son's various minor ailments are being magnified. They repeatedly demand that Estrada's knee ailment be treated in the US because allegedly, only US doctors could treat it. Likewise, they are demanding that Estrada's cataract be operated on in the US. Medical experts in the country, however, assert that they are capable of treating his simple knee ailment, the cataract in his eye and all his other discomforts.

GOVERNMENT OFFERS PNB TO TAN

The government is offering Lucio Tan "first priority rights" to increase his ownership holdings of the Philippine National Bank in the new scheme to privatize the bank fully.

Two years ago, Tan was able to control 46% of PNB's assets from a fraudulent purchase of a cheap public stocks offering by the bank. Last year, the government poured some P25 billion loans into the bank to solve its financial obligations, such as unpaid loans. By September, this reached 53% or P51.6 billion. The financial problems remain, necessitating drastic measures for rehabilitation to make the bank more saleable.

The initial rehabilitation program recommends wiping out the P25 billion debts through a debt swap by transforming the debt into owners' stocks for the government. Thus, the 16% formerly owned by the government would become 44.95%. This will also result in a readjustment of Tan's stocks from 46% to 44.95%.

By equalizing the stocks of the government and Tan, the former can bring in more resources and personnel to manage and rehabilitate the bank. To fully operationalize this scheme, the bank needs another P10 billion cash infusion. This will surely come from unloading the stocks of the government according to the privatization program for the bank.

The government will unload all its stocks in PNB as dictated by the IMF. It is finalizing measures for the first priority option offer for Tan to purchase the stocks and therefore wrest super-majority control over the bank. Tan is inclined on total control of PNB because Philippine Airlines and other companies owned by Tan are among the biggest debtors of the bank.

RPA ADMITS TO BEING COJUANGCO'S PRIVATE ARMY

The Revolutionary Proletarian army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) admitted that it is a private army of Marcos and Estrada crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Carapali Lualhati, RPA leader, admitted that they were protecting a controversial "corporative" project of Cojuangco in Pinggot, Ilog, Negros Occidental. Farmers are opposed to it because it encroaches on the lands they till. In the meantime, cases have been piling up regarding the RPA-ABB's extortion from farmers, gravel and sand concessionaires, small-store owners and even politicians.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Ang Bayan (AB) has come out with an Iloko edition in response to consistent requests from the masses and revolutionary forces in Ilocos-Cordillera, Cagayan Valley, northern Central Luzon and other areas, for Iloko versions of *AB* and other revolutionary publications. *AB* calls on its readers to send comments to improve its new edition.

TACTICAL OFFENSIVES LAUNCHED ANEW IN NEPAL



The guerrilla fighters of the Communist Party of Nepal (PKN-Maoist) successfully launched three coordinated tactical offensives on November 23. Thirty-two troopers of the reactionary army and police died in the offensives launched in Syangja region in the western part of Nepal.

The attack marked the end of a ceasefire agreement between the government and PKN-Maoist after the government reneged on its promise to end the constitutional monarchy and establish a republican state.

Meanwhile, King Gyanendra imposed a state of emergency on November 27 and declared the closure of all Leftist publications, banned demonstrations and ordered the arrest of all suspected supporters of the revolutionary movement. As a sign of protest, the Nepalese people are poised to declare a general strike on December 7.

The PKN-Maoist is waging a national-democratic revolution in Nepal, a country in South Asia between India and China. It has a population of 24 million.

RECESSION HITS U.S., GERMANY AND JAPAN

In succession, economists and officials of the three most powerful imperialist powers have admitted that their economies are in recession. This is the first time since 1970 that the US, Japan and Germany simultaneously experienced a downturn in their economies.

The US National Bureau of Economic Research officially declared on November 26 that the economy has been in recession since March 2001. This is the tenth recession experienced by the US since the end of World War II. The economy is expected to continue its decline by another 1.5% in the last quarter of the year. The recession is expected to last up to the middle of 2002.

According to standards set by economists, a country's economy is in recession if it experiences a slowdown in local production for two consecutive quarters.

Meanwhile, Germany's economy fell by 0.1% in July-September 2001. It is estimated to slide further by 0.1-0.2% in the last quarter of this year.